

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Powell-Vail House

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

### 2. Location

street & number East side of Vail Road, 1.2 mi. N of Hwy 50 N/A  not for publication

city, town Pheba  vicinity

state Mississippi code MS county Clay code 25 zip code 39755

### 3. Classification

#### Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

#### Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

#### Number of Resources within Property

| Contributing | Noncontributing    |
|--------------|--------------------|
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u> buildings |
| _____        | _____ sites        |
| _____        | _____ structures   |
| _____        | _____ objects      |
| <u>2</u>     | <u>0</u> Total     |

Name of related multiple property listing:

Clay County Multiple Resource Area

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Kenneth H. P. Paul

Signature of certifying official

SEPT. 19, 1991

Date

Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Melissa Bryan

Entered in the  
National Register

11/15/91

for  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic: single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/ Not in use

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: dogtrot

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation concretewalls weatherboardroof metal

other \_\_\_\_\_

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**Describe present and historic physical appearance.**

The Powell-Vail House is a one-story wood-frame mid-nineteenth-century vernacular "dogtrot" house that faces north on a partially-wooded rural site about a mile and a half northeast of the village of Pheba in southwestern Clay County. The building is rectangular in massing and roughly symmetrical in plan, with a gable roof having a double pitch on each side. The building now rests upon concrete footings, but was probably supported by large wooden blocks originally.

The plan consists of an open central breezeway (called a "dogtrot") with a large room on either side and a smaller shed room at each of the four corners. All of the rooms open into the central breezeway but there is no interior access between rooms. Between the shed rooms on the north and south elevations are porches that take the form of recessed loggias instead of the full-length porch more typical of dogtrot houses in Mississippi. Each porch has two square wood posts supported by brick pedestals (presumably because the lower ends have rotted away). The pedestals rest directly on the ground, rather than on the porch floor (see photo #1).

The exterior walls are clad in horizontal board siding. Each of the four shed rooms has a small six-over-six double-hung window on its north or south exterior wall, and each of the larger rooms has two six-over-six windows flanking a gable-end chimney. There are also two very small six-pane windows in each gable to provide light to the attic.

Interior walls of the two larger rooms are finished with wide flush boards. The hearths in these rooms have simple mantels made from planks. The interior walls of the secondary rooms are clad in tongue-in-groove boards. All the doors are made of narrow planks nailed to cross-members.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

c. 1860  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

c. 1860  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Powell-Vail House is architecturally significant within the context of rural settlement in Clay County because it is a well-preserved example of a variant form of "dogtrot" house that clearly shows the translation of the dogtrot houseform from log to frame construction and also illustrates the way in which the dogtrot houseform could vary in its plan while maintaining the same basic configuration. The Powell-Vail House differs from the more typical dogtrot plan in that it has shed (or cabinet) rooms on all four corners, built beneath the roofline of the front and rear porches, leaving, in effect, a recessed central loggia on the front and rear instead of an open porch. It is not uncommon to find shed rooms on the rear of dogtrot houses in Mississippi, but it is unusual to find them on the front elevation, occupying part of what would normally be a full-length front porch.

The Powell-Vail House is very similar in form to the McNair Plantation House (ca 1835; ca 1850) in Hinds County, listed on the National Register in 1982. Both are one-story wood frame houses, and both have an open central passage (the "dogtrot") with a large room on either side, and smaller shed rooms at either end of the front façade. The McNair House has a rear ell, however, instead of rear shed rooms.

Both of these houses can be contrasted with the Turnage House, another Clay County dogtrot house. The Turnage House, built shortly after the turn of the century, has a much more conventional dogtrot plan, featuring a full-length porch across the front. Instead of shed rooms, it has additional rooms in an ell extending perpendicularly from the rear as does the McNair House.

The importance of the dogtrot house as a vernacular houseform in Clay County is addressed in the cover document for the Clay County MPS.

The Powell-Vail House is believed to have been built not long after the land on which it stands was purchased by Samuel Powell in 1855, when the area was still part of Oktibbeha County. In 1899 the property was purchased by Richard Vail, who resided there with his family for many years. It is now owned by one of his descendants, but is not currently occupied.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

See Historic Context bibliography.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Specify repository:**

Miss. Dept. of Archives & History

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

**UTM References**

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See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of the Powell-Vail House lie along a line (now fenced) about 20 feet north of the house and extend out 50 feet from the east, south, and west elevations. The boundaries include a smoke house to the south of the house, but exclude a modern house just north of the northern line.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

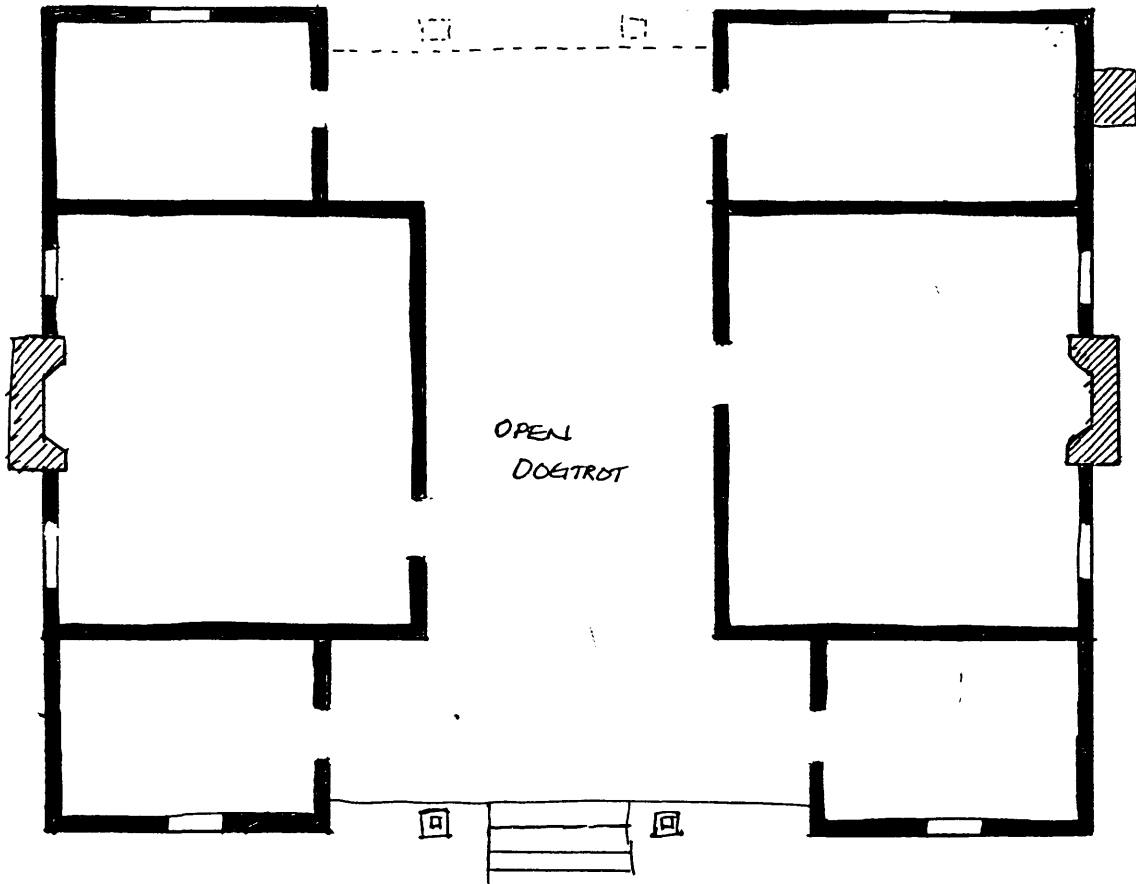
The boundaries include the land immediately around the house which is unaltered and associated with the building's early domestic use.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Joan Embree (revised by Richard Cawthon, MDAH, September 1991)  
 organization Preservation Consultant date 8/1/89  
 street & number 20 Lake Valley Road telephone (601) 324-0410  
 city or town Starkville state MS zip code 39759  
 Owner: Mrs. Nancy Prevost, 508 Hughes Road, Columbus, MS 39701

POWELL-VAIL HOUSE



NOT TO SCALE

OLD FENCE

NEW HOUSE

DRIVE OFF OF VAIL ROAD